Ministry of Agriculture

Plan for 2015-16

saskatchewan.ca

Government of Saskatchewan

Statement from the Minister

The Honourable Lyle Stewart

Minister of Agriculture

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Agriculture's Operational Plan for 2015-16.

Government's Direction and Budget for 2015-16 is focused on *Keeping Saskatchewan Strong*, balancing building for the future with fiscal responsibility. Saskatchewan's economy is diverse and agriculture is an important contributor to our success.

The 2015-16 budget for the Ministry of Agriculture is $362.4 million, including $71.2 million for strategic initiatives, $26.7 million for agricultural research and $4.2 million for third-party grants to develop and promote the industry. The budget also contains $240 million to fully fund business risk management programs such as Crop Insurance, AgriStability and AgriInvest to help backstop farming operations as they look to grow and expand.

This budget will help keep agriculture and Saskatchewan's economy strong as we focus on building a productive and sustainable agriculture industry.

The Ministry will report on progress made toward this plan, within the financial parameters provided, in the 2015-16 Annual Report.

Government of Saskatchewan

Response to Government Direction

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to *Keeping Saskatchewan Strong*. The province faces challenges due to volatile resource revenue; however, Saskatchewan's economy is diverse and resilient. There are strengths in many sectors from agriculture and manufacturing to resources such as potash and uranium.

With controlled spending and continued support for the conditions necessary for economic growth, the Government will meet the needs of our growing province. Investments in people and infrastructure continue to support Government's commitment to establishing Saskatchewan as the best place to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life.

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan People	Meeting the challenges of growth	Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people	Delivering responsive and responsible government

Government's vision and four goals provide the framework for ministries, agencies and third parties to align their programs and services and meet the needs of Saskatchewan's citizens.

All ministries and agencies will report on progress in their 2015-16 annual reports.

Operational Plan

Mandate Statement

The Ministry fosters a commercially viable self-sufficient and sustainable agriculture and food sector. The Ministry encourages farmers, ranchers and communities to develop higher value-added production and processing and promotes sustainable economic development in rural Saskatchewan through better risk management.

Mission Statement

The Ministry enables a prosperous, market-driven agricultural industry through a supportive legislative framework, policies, programs and services.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people	Meeting the challenges of growth	Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people	Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: enhanced long term growth, competitiveness and sustainability of the industry

Ministry Goal

Targeted investment in infrastructure, science and innovation

Strategies

- Work with stakeholders to identify opportunities and set priorities.
- Transition to an outcome-based regulatory framework.
- Partner with organizations to achieve Growth Plan targets.

Key Actions

- In support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* goals and objectives, implement sector driven strategies (Crops, Livestock, Irrigation and Value-Added Strategies) that increase investment in Saskatchewan, and contribute to the benefits from the growing demand for food, feed, fuel and fibre.
- Provide programs and funding to assist the livestock industry to improve biosecurity and deal with emergency events.
- Collaborate with public and private partners to deliver pest surveillance results.
- Work with stakeholders to examine infrastructure impacting competitiveness, labour and market conditions.
- Develop and deliver Growing Forward 2 programming to advance the industry.
- Make targeted investments in wheat research.
- Collaborate with industry to improve coordination of research investments and technology transfer including project funding, research capacity and funding for on-farm demonstration of new knowledge and technologies.
- Maximize the agricultural and public benefits of Crown land through strategically focused sales and leasing programs.
- Provide technical resources in support of science-based regulation.

Performance Measures

Annual crop production

A key goal of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* is to increase crop production by 10 million tonnes by 2020. In 2013, Saskatchewan producers harvested the largest crop in the province's history and surpassed the 2020 target. There are many variables that go into producing a successful crop with weather being one of the most important. The challenge for the Ministry will be working with producers and industry to sustain the growth over the long run. The Ministry will use its resources to emphasize the importance of adopting the best crop management, production and protection practices that will result in increased and profitable crop production in Saskatchewan.

Annual value-added revenue

Saskatchewan's agri-food exports are driven by the sale of raw commodities as that is our strength; however, the timing is right to also grow our agriculture value-added (processing) sector. A strong value-added industry will allow Saskatchewan to take advantage of the opportunities that come with an increasing demand for food, feed, fuel and fibre, as well as grow our domestic and international markets.

To meet the target of close to a 50 per cent increase in total revenue, or $6.0 billion by 2020, processing of all crop commodities will need to occur. In order to reach this target the Ministry developed an Agriculture Value-Added Strategy to capture economic value beyond primary production through attracting investment, developing infrastructure and creating new knowledge and opportunities. It is anticipated that the target for increased revenue will send a compelling signal to industry, the research community and other governments that the value-added sector has significant growth opportunities and will be an important contributor to the success of Saskatchewan's Plan for Growth.

Annual livestock sector revenue

The *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth* calls for significant growth in the livestock herd and expanded livestock feeding. Significant global population growth is anticipated over the next 30 years. Some of the countries with the fastest growth rates are also expected to experience significant increases in income which is anticipated to result in increased demand for meat protein. Saskatchewan has 21 million acres of pasture and forage land well suited for livestock production. This provides an excellent opportunity for Saskatchewan to supply this growing demand.

The target for the livestock industry is to exceed $2.0 billion in annual farm cash receipts by 2020. The Ministry will use its resources to emphasize the importance of adopting the best livestock management, and production or biosecurity practices that will result in increased and profitable livestock production in Saskatchewan.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people	Meeting the challenges of growth	Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people	Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: enhanced trade advocacy

Ministry Goal

Support industry to enhance trade in priority markets

Strategies

- Develop and implement trade strategies for key agriculture markets.
- Collaborate with partners, including industry, to access target markets.
- Influence federal trade policy to reflect Saskatchewan priorities.

Key Action

- Build industry capacity to promote Saskatchewan agriculture exports in international markets and partner with stakeholders on trade advocacy, market development and investment attraction.

Performance Measure

Value of agri-food exports

Under the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*, the province's agri-food exports target is $15.0 billion by 2020. The target to increase agri-food exports builds on the other Plan for Growth targets related to our traditional strengths in primary production and ongoing efforts to expand value-added activity in the province. With the forecast growth in world populations and income levels, global demand for food and agricultural-related goods is anticipated to increase. The aim of the Ministry is to position the sector to take advantage of these emerging opportunities by expanding market presence, influencing federal trade negotiations and collaborating with the private sector.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people	Meeting the challenges of growth	Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people	Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: enhanced client service

Ministry Goal

Efficiently develop and deliver effective programs and services

Strategies

- Implement modern service delivery tools and techniques.
- Work with clients and stakeholders to develop, evaluate and enhance programs, services and legislation.
- Implement service standards throughout the Ministry.

Key Actions

- Continue the review, development and implementation of initiatives that contribute to the successful transition and long-term operation of former federal pasture lands by patron groups.
- Develop and implement a digital strategy that contains new ways of offering Ministry services, including online delivery, to clients.

Performance Measure

Percentage of clients satisfied with programs and services

The goal of the Ministry is for 75 per cent of all producers surveyed to be satisfied with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture by 2017. The Ministry offers many programs and services designed to assist farmers and ranchers, including a wide variety of publications (both print and electronic), customer service telephone lines, specialist services and program development. Technological advancements in areas such as social media, smart phones, tablets and online transacting are happening at a rapid pace. As technology changes, the Ministry will continue to update its service and information delivery systems to ensure clients' needs are being met, and programs and services are supportive of their overall agricultural operations.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people	Meeting the challenges of growth	Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people	Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority in support of the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth*: improved public perception of agriculture

Ministry Goal

Partner to promote the benefits of agriculture

Strategies

- Promote agricultural learning in the Saskatchewan educational system.
- Implement a targeted agriculture awareness strategy.
- Implement a youth strategy for agriculture.

Key Actions

- Partner with industry to deliver the agriculture awareness strategy.
- Promote the sustainability of agriculture.
- Promote career opportunities in the agriculture industry to Saskatchewan youth.

Performance Measure

Public understanding of agriculture as measured by the percentage of Saskatchewan residents with a positive perception of agriculture.

The goal of the Ministry is to ensure that 85 per cent of Saskatchewan residents have a positive perception of agriculture. Agriculture has and will continue to play a critical role in Saskatchewan's growth and identity. Today, agriculture is a progressive, modern, and market driven Saskatchewan industry, yet the average citizen is removed from direct food production. Therefore, it is often sensational media stories that influence the public's opinion of the agriculture industry and our food supply, and as a result, the public is liable to be exposed to information that may be erroneous, inaccurate, fabricated or biased.

The Ministry is working to provide factual information about the importance, relevance and sustainability of the province's agricultural industry in order to improve the public's understanding of agriculture related issues and earn social licence. Efforts directed at youth are intended to provide education on the science of agriculture as well as the multitude of diverse career and entrepreneurial opportunities the sector offers.

Highlights

The following are key announcements being made in the 2015-16 Budget:

- Provide $240.0 million to fully fund the Province's 40 per cent share of business risk management programs. This includes funding for Crop Insurance, as well as fully funding AgriStability and AgriInvest.
- Provide $26.7 million to support agricultural research and development, including $2.0 million in funding for the Global Institute for Food Security.
- $4.2 million for third-party grants to a variety of agricultural organizations to develop and promote the industry.
- A $2.0 million investment in the modernization of the Crown Land Management System.
- $71.2 million in Growing Forward 2 funding for the areas of innovation and research, environmental farm planning, farm business management, rural water infrastructure, food safety/plant and animal health, value-added business development, agriculture awareness and trade and market development.

For More Information

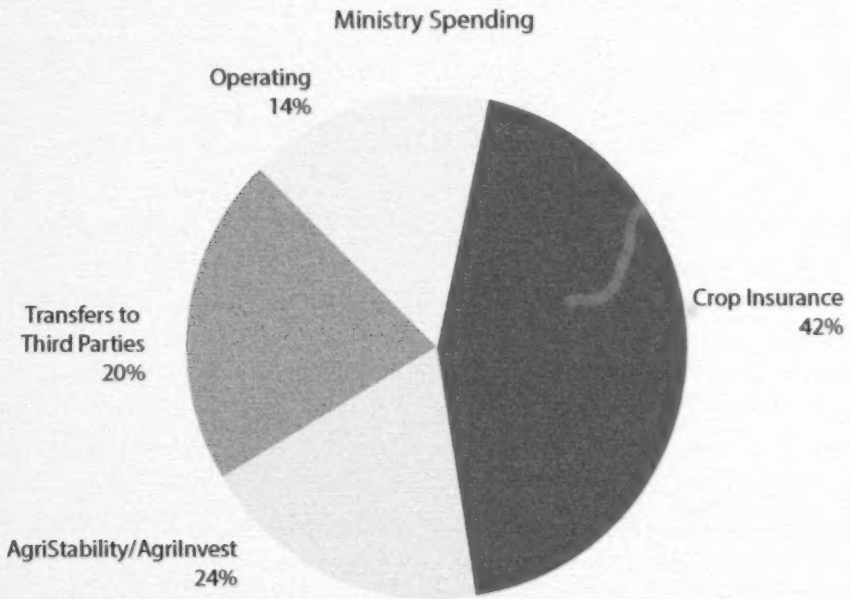
Please visit the Ministry's website at http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/government-structure/ministries/agriculture or call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377

Financial Summary

2015-16 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	11,294
Industry Assistance	7,551
Land Management	6,416
Policy and Planning	3,039
Research and Technology	26,733
Regional Services	40,425
Financial Programs	26,192
Business Risk Management	239,970
Ministry Operations Appropriation	**361,620**
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(2,000)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	2,816
Total Expense	**362,436**

FTE Staff Complement	392.4

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: http://www.saskatchewan.ca/budget



Government of Saskatchewan